

# Deep Rooted: Race, Education and Inequities in North Carolina

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# What is CREED?

Through research, coalition building, and technical assistance, **the Center for Racial Equity in Education (CREED)** works to close opportunity gaps for all children in P-20 education, especially children of color, with the vision that one day race will no longer be the primary predictor of educational outcomes.





James E. Ford  
Executive Director



Janeen Bryant  
Dir. of Operations

# The Art of Truth Telling

# History as a Picture

# The Roots of Inequity

# Sankofa

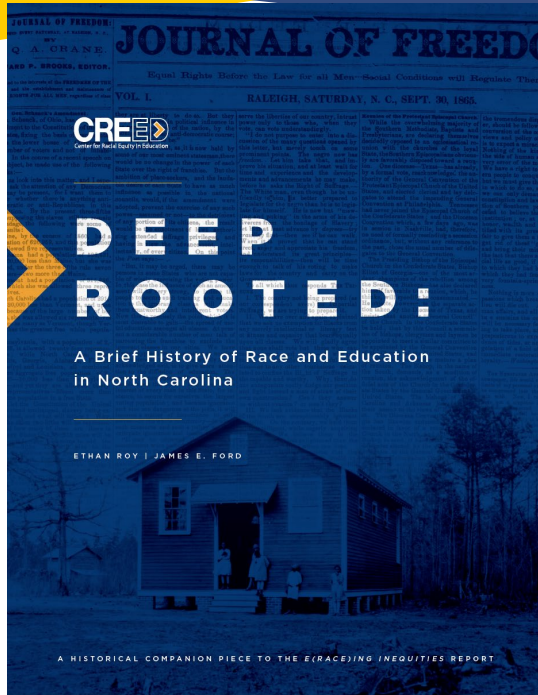


# It All Starts with Freedom Hill





# Deep Rooted: A Brief History of Race & Education




- Black people in NC have always pursued education as a path to freedom
- The politics of race have always influenced education
- Efforts to marginalize Black educational pursuits are a consistent pattern
- Even now, policy has restricted opportunity for Blacks and other groups of color
- There is context for the idea that race matters
- **North Carolina's slavery -based social structure lay at the root of inequity in education in the state**

# Enslaved Populations Concentrated in the East

- The colonial slave population was mainly concentrated in the eastern part of the colony
- Slavery lay at the foundation of North Carolina society and was foundational to the colony's economy
- Relied on violence, coercion, and negotiation—including whippings, threat of sale, sexual violence, and an ever-changing legal framework—to control enslaved communities.

# Education as a Threat to Social Order

- Education was an act of resistance —and a serious threat to the social order
- Literacy brought opportunities for slaves to forge passes and free papers, to access and spread abolitionist literature, and to read the Bible, which was thought to encourage visions of freedom.
- Slaveholders in colonial North Carolina also associated literacy with the potential for uprisings and unruliness by slaves
- A wave of anti-Black education legislation was passed after Wilmington native David Walker's *Appeal* was published



“...the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dissatisfaction on their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this state.”

North Carolina General Assembly in 1830

# Learning 'On the Sly'

- Many learned or began to learn before they were freed taking their instruction mostly 'on the sly'
- Apprenticeships served as a primary mechanism for acquiring literacy
- It was necessary for enslaved skilled craftsmen to learn numeracy and literacy as a matter of business.
- In 1825, NC became the first state to create a system of universal public education for whites
- **North Carolina's slavery -based social structure lay at the root of inequity in education in the state**

# Abram Galloway

“They hunger for the ‘forbidden fruit’ of knowledge with a zest of appetite which imparts marvelous powers of acquisition” (p.9)

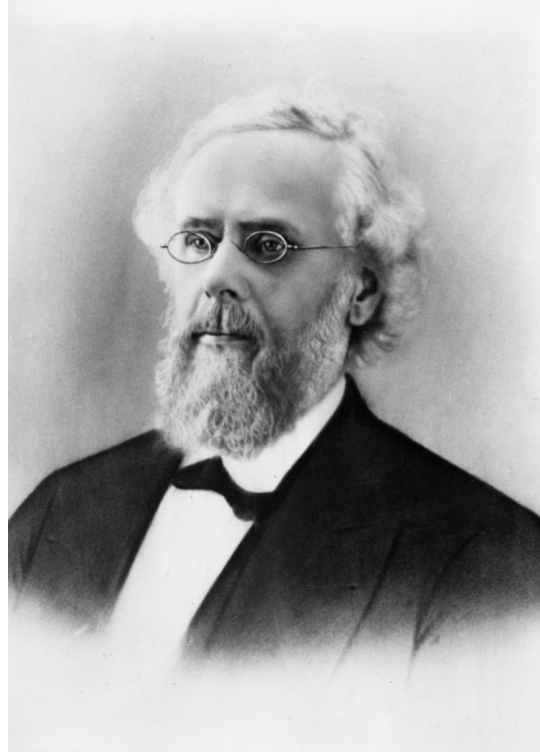


HON. ABRAM GALLOWAY.

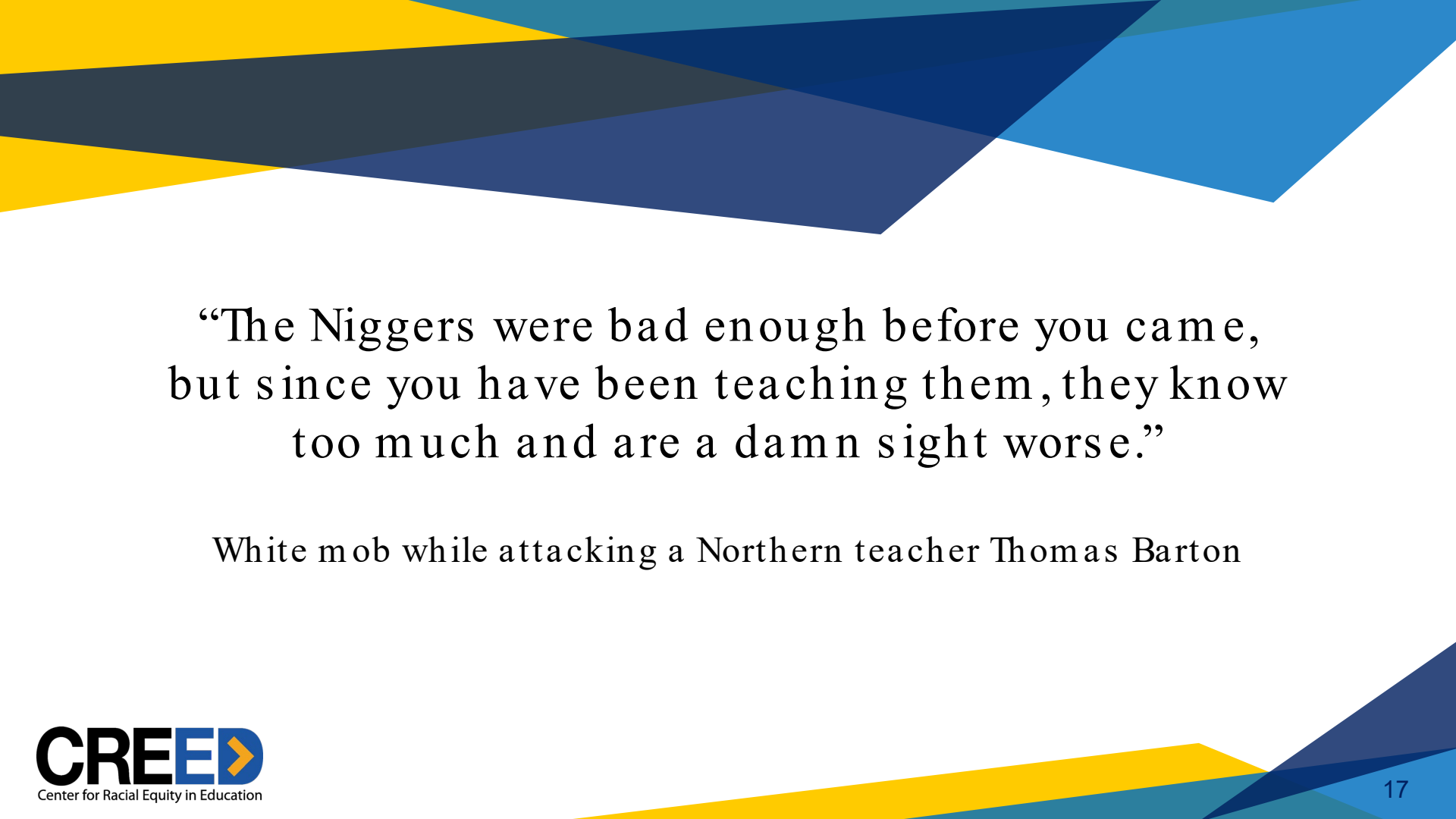
# Civil War & Reconstruction

- One of the first aspects of free life for formerly enslaved people in Union-occupied North Carolina was access to education
- Northern teachers almost immediately entered eastern North Carolina.
- Contrary to popular belief among whites at the time, African Americans were talented, eager students despite generations of enslavement.
- Teachers provided by AMA were corralled by the Freedmen's Bureau to create a loose educational network
- Whites burned down four schoolhouses in early 1866 and two more the following year

# Rev. Samuel Stanford Ashley







“The Niggers were bad enough before you came,  
but since you have been teaching them, they know  
too much and are a damn sight worse.”

White mob while attacking a Northern teacher Thomas Barton

# Constitutional Convention of 1868

- Officially created a truly universal public education system for Blacks and Whites
- There was a desire among Whites to control to curriculum to make Blacks “useful and profitable” laborers
- Fears of an integrated school system fed anxieties among many conservative Whites
- **In 1869, Alamance and Orange counties alone saw 55 whippings, three hangings, one drowning, one shooting, three houses shot into, and two houses torn down.**
- White supremacist violence was on the rise with the arrival of the Ku Klux Klan

## The Wilmington *Daily Journal* (1868)

“Think of it, you men of families. You may die soon.  
... After you are gone, your children may be forced to  
go to school...with negroes.”

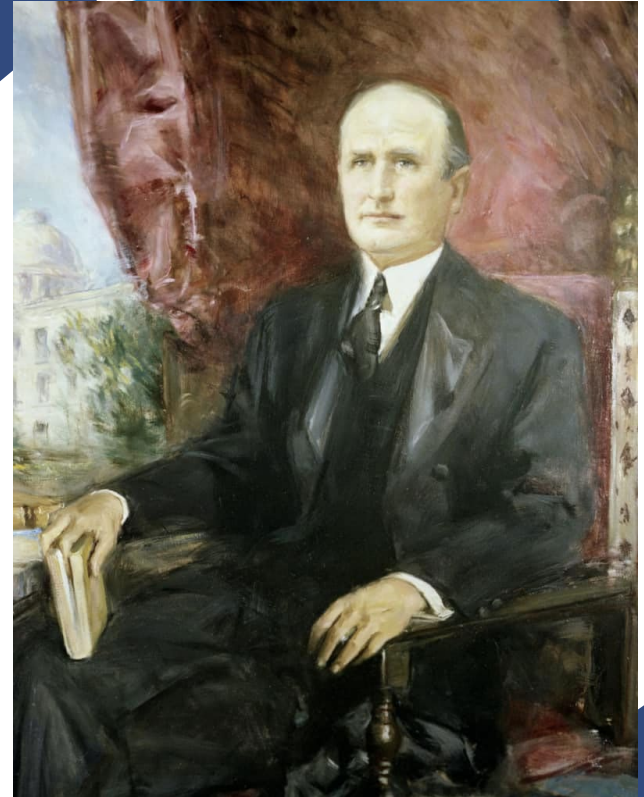
# Beginning of Segregation

- Democrats regained control of the forced Supt. Ashley out
- By 1876 had enshrined segregation into the state constitution
- Passed an unconstitutional law funding schools based on property taxes of each racial group in 1881 (overturned by the state Supreme Court in 1886)
- Deliberately underfunding and under-resourcing of Black schools was deliberate
- **White supremacy campaign was in full swing**

# Deliberate Disenfranchisement

Gov. Charles B. Aycock

- Universal education (for Whites) and Black voter disenfranchisement
- Instituted literacy test for voting in 1908
- Championed education for poor Whites while placing higher tax burden on Blacks
- From 1904 to 1920, annual spending per white school averaged \$3,442 but only averaged \$500 for black schools
- Funds earmarked for rural Black instead went to Whites



# Aycock Accepting Democratic Nomination in 1900

“We have taught them much in the past two years in the University of White Supremacy, we will graduate them in August next [date of election of governor] with a diploma that will entitle them to form a genuine White man’s party. Then we shall have no more revolutions in Wilmington; we shall have no more dead and wounded negroes on the streets, because we shall have good government in the State and peace everywhere. But to do this we must disfranchise the negro. The amendment to the Constitution is presented in solution of the problem. The Democratic party knows the truth — it is certain that the unlettered white man is more capable of government than the negro.”

# Outside Influences

- Northern philanthropists make their way into the South
- Julius Rosenwald of Sears, Roebuck & Co. start fund providing matching grants for schools Black schools
- Anna T. Jeanes Fund provided for teachers in these schools
- North Carolina had more Rosenwald schools than any other state, with 800+ by 1932
- Funding inequity still persisted, but Black communities embraced their schools

## Students at Pantego School, a Rosenwald Fund school in Beaufort Co.





# Subverting Brown



- *Brown v. Board* decision in 1954 symbolized end to segregation
- Gov. Umstead created a Ed Committee headed by Thomas J. Pearsall
- Pearsall creates a plan that undermines desegregation by allocating funds white students to attend different schools
- Also permitted local communities to shut down schools in resistance to integration



“If the Pearsall Plan doesn’t work, the Smith  
and Wesson Plan will.”

Speaker from Klan rally in 1958

# White Flight and Black Layoffs

- Most public school districts desegregated between 1968 and 1976
- Many Whites began moving to all-white suburbs or private schools
- Black community lost scores of educators
  - More than 3,000 teachers
  - Nearly 500 elementary principals
  - All superintendents
- Hyde County fought to keep their traditional Black schools



# Saved by Swann

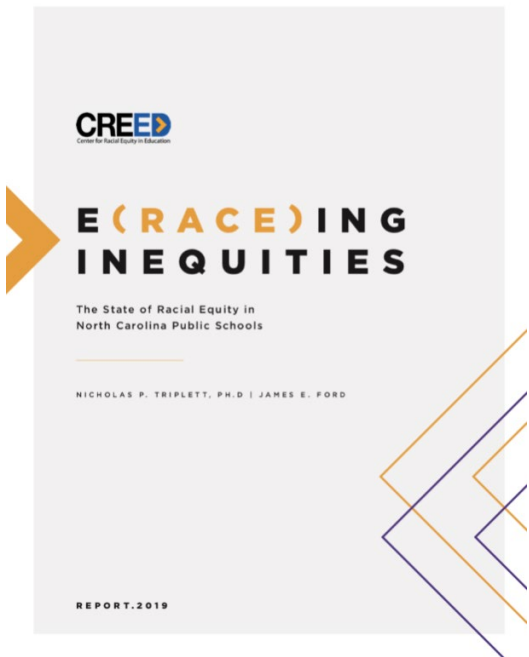
- In 1971, the Supreme Court found in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools* that school districts could use busing to implement desegregation in public schools.
- The Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system quickly became a desegregation model for districts around the country.
- In response to increasing desegregation, white families began moving to suburban school districts or enrolling their children in private schools —a continuation of the white flight phenomenon that had begun in the 1960s.

# Litigating *Leandro* and *Capacchione*

- In the *Hoke County Board of Education v. State*, *Leandro v. State*, the court found the state constitution required every student had the right to a “sound basic education”
- Schools in economically poor areas must receive additional funding.
- Due to the intersection of race and poverty in North Carolina, many underfunded districts had high African American enrollment.
- Resegregation gained steam after the *Capacchione v. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools* case virtually overturned the *Swann* decision of 1971. The era of court-mandated integration efforts in North Carolina was effectively ended

# Contemporary Relevance

# E(race)ing Inequities: The State of Racial Equity



- This report analyzed data on 1,580,294 students in kindergarten through grade 13 during the 2016-2017 school year.
- 51% male and 49% female
- 6% Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- 13% Exceptional Children (EC) or Students with Disabilities
- Roughly half Economically Disadvantaged and 58% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 11% Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG)

# Why Is it All About Race?

- North Carolina has a particularly unique history dealing with race and education (see forthcoming report *Deep Rooted*)
- *E(race)ing Inequities* uses statistical models to isolate the influence of race/ethnicity on educational access and opportunity.






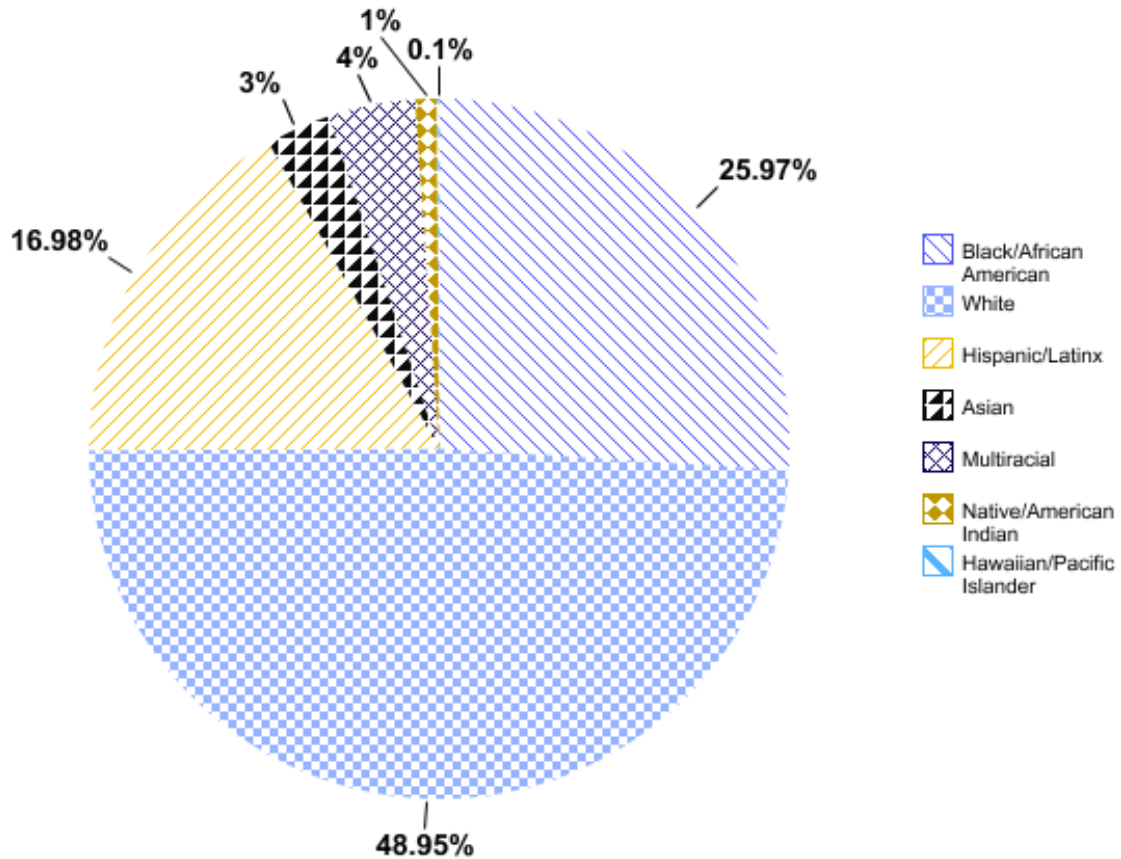
# What We Wanted to Know

- ◆ Does race influence educational access and outcomes?
- ◆ Does race influence access and outcomes after accounting for other factors?
  - ◆ Descriptive
  - ◆ Predictive

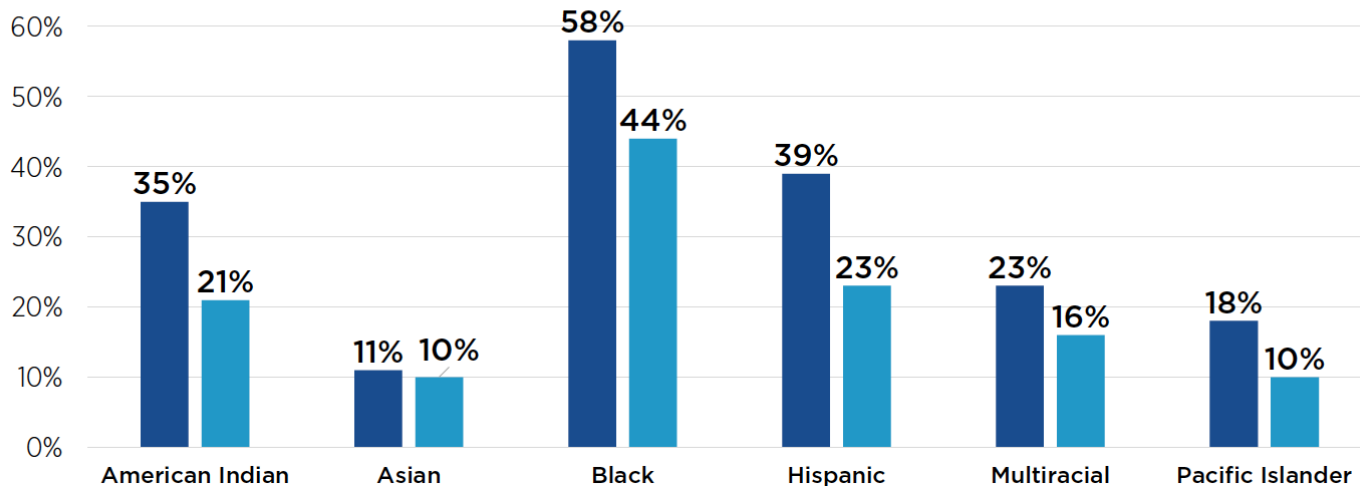
 Race  
(only)

 Race (controlling for gender, Limited English Proficient, ability status,  
Free/Reduced Lunch and giftedness)

Race/Ethnicity



**FIGURE 1.2 : Likelihood of taking a course taught by a novice teacher by race/ethnicity**



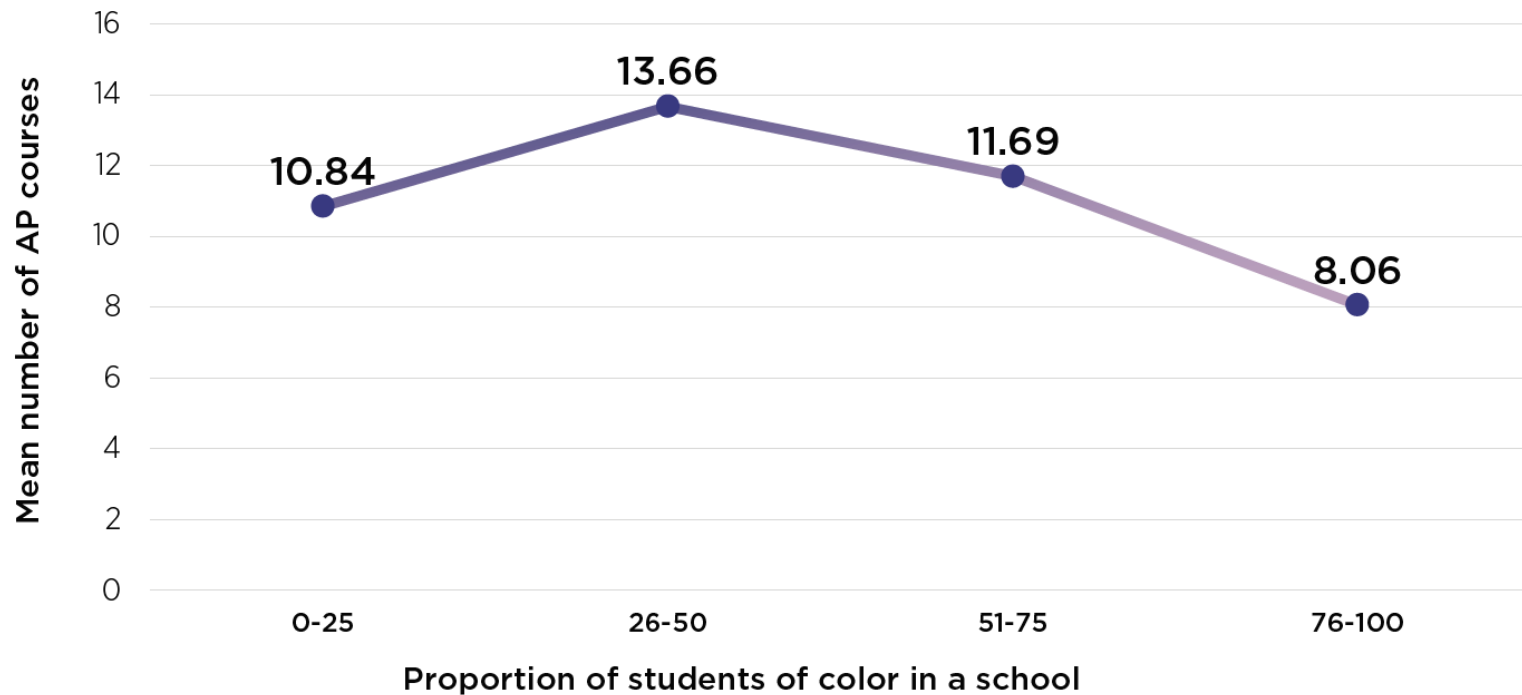
- Race as the only variable
- Race while controlling for gender, LEP, ability status, FRL, and giftedness (AIG)

WHITES ARE THE COMPARISON GROUP

# Teachers

- 80% of teachers are white, 13% are Black, 2.3% are Hispanic, 1% are American Indian
- Black students had the highest proportion of courses taught by novice teachers
- Students of color are overexposed to novice teachers
- Schools with more students of color do NOT have more novice teachers (sorting is happening *within* school)
- White students were taught by same race teachers in 90% of their courses compared to 31% for Black students
- LEAs with highest teacher turnover were 78% students of color

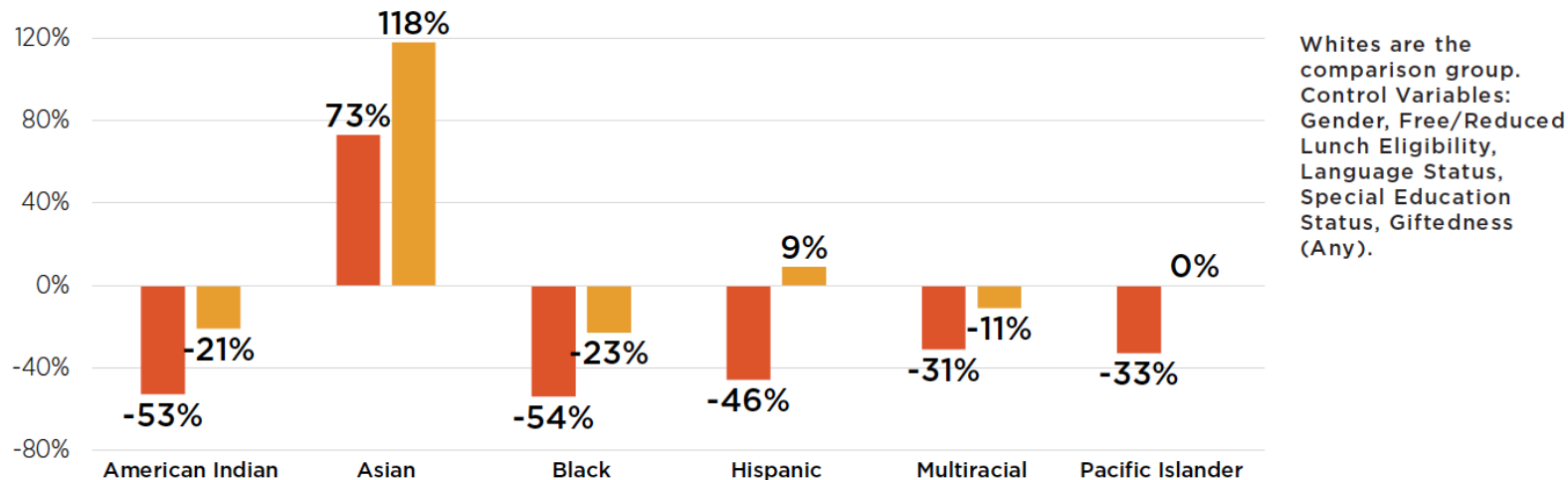
**FIGURE 2.6 : Mean Number of AP Courses Offered by the Percentage of Students of Color**



# Advanced Placement Courses

- Black, Hispanic and Native American students are significantly underrepresented in AP courses
- Black students attained the lowest scores on AP exams on average
- Black and American Indians were 60% less likely than Whites to earn a 3 or better
- Schools with higher percentages of students of color offered significantly fewer AP courses
- 6% of all students of color that could earn a North Carolina Academic Scholars Endorsement go to schools that offer too few courses.

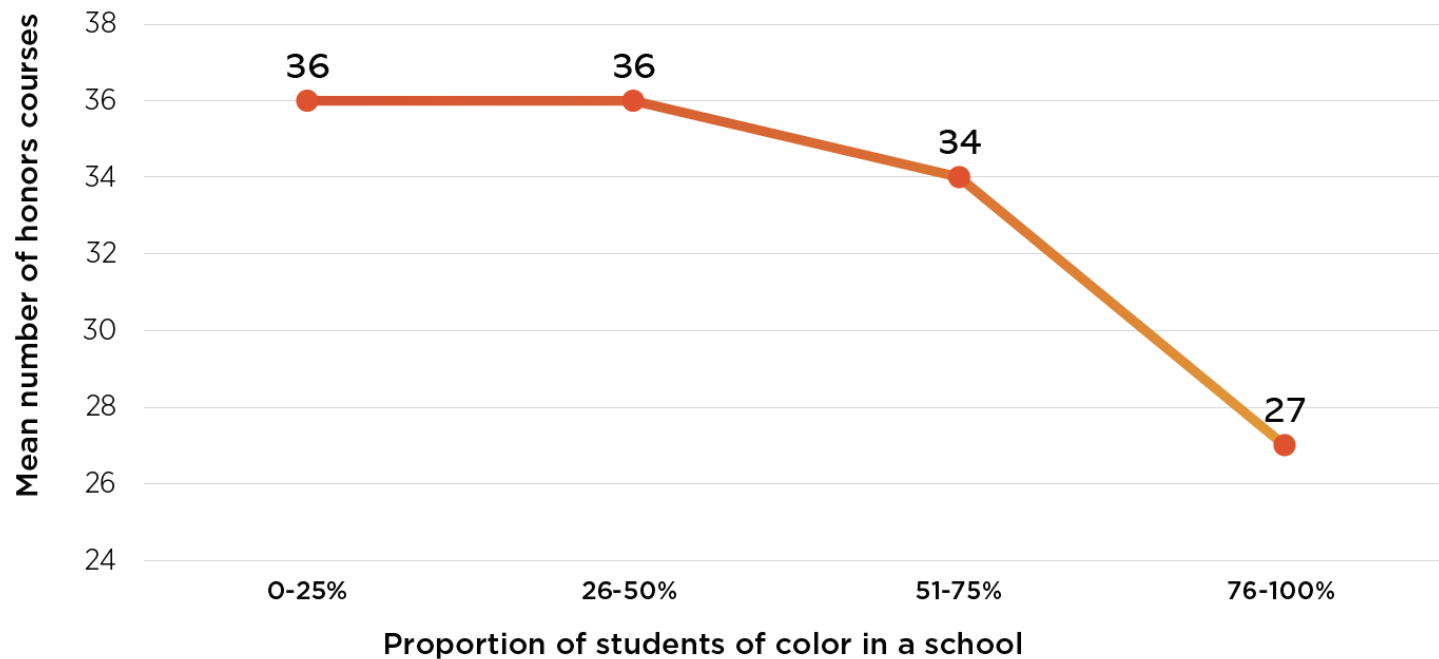
**FIGURE 3.3: Likelihood of Taking at Least One Honors Course (Grades 9-12) by Race/Ethnicity**



■ Race as the only variable

■ Race while controlling for gender, LEP, ability status, FRL, and giftedness (AIG)

**FIGURE 3.5 : Mean Number of Honors Courses Offered by Schools by Percentage of Students of Color**

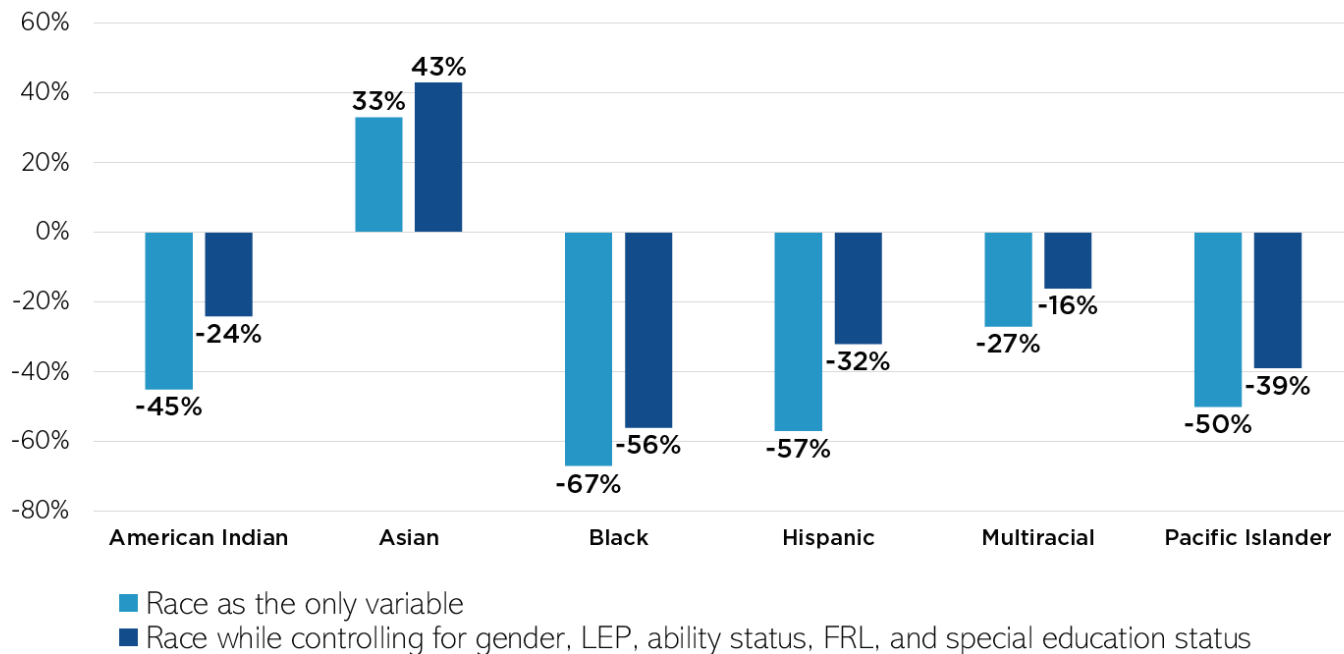




# Honors Courses

- Asian and White students are overrepresented, while Black, American Indian, Multiracial, and Hispanic students are underrepresented
- If it were representative, Black students would have take **more than 2,700 honors courses**
- Again, schools with the higher proportion of students of color offer fewer honors courses
- Taking other factors into account, Blacks are 23% less likely than Whites to take honors courses
- This is gap of 20,000 more students

**FIGURE 4.8 : Likelihood of AIG Any Designation by Race/Ethnicity**

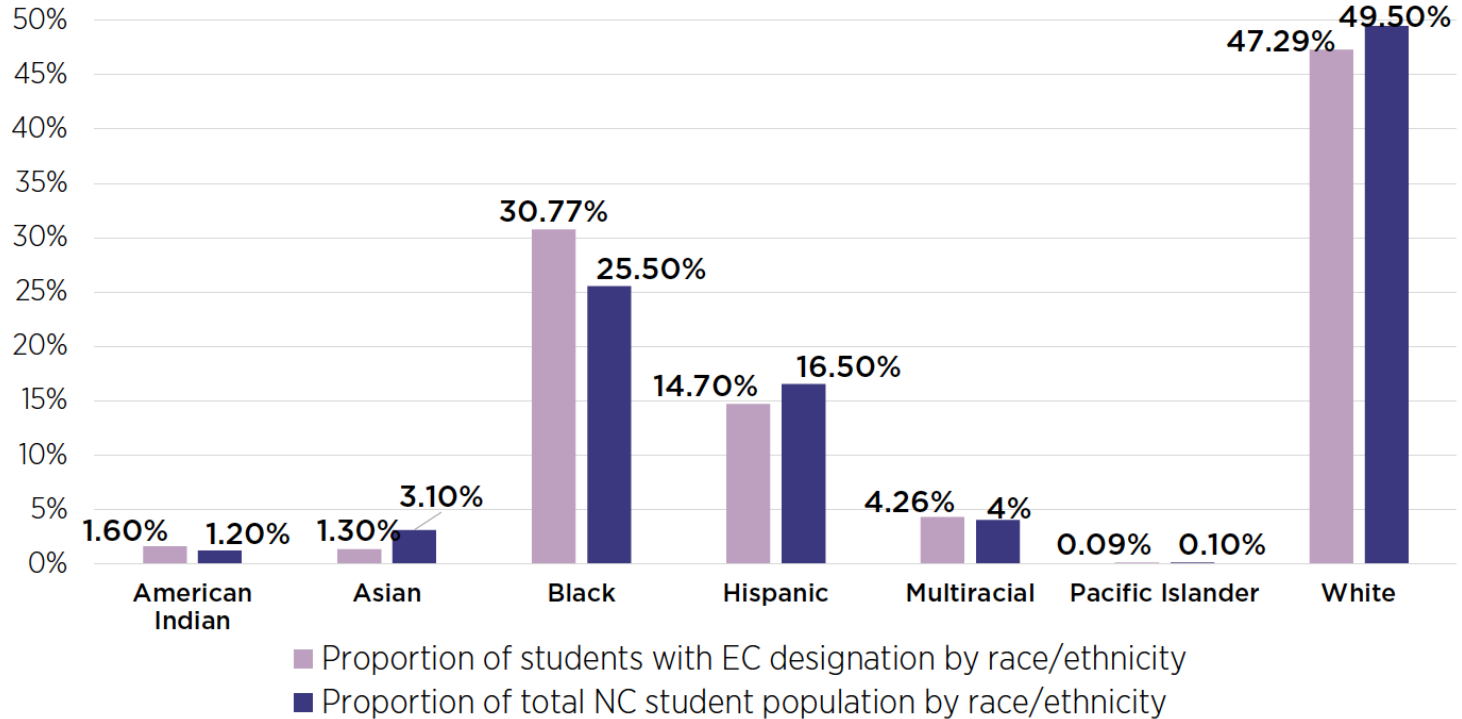


Whites are the comparison group. Control Variables: Gender, Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility, Language Status, Special Education Status.

# Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG)

- In both AIG Math and AIG Other, Asian and White students are over-represented in comparison to their percentage of the state student population
- American Indian, Black, and Hispanic students are under-represented in both AIG Math and AIG Other.
- In AIG Reading, Asian, White, and Multiracial students are over-represented
- The proportion of AIG Any students that are Black is less than half of what we would expect based on their proportion of the total NC student population

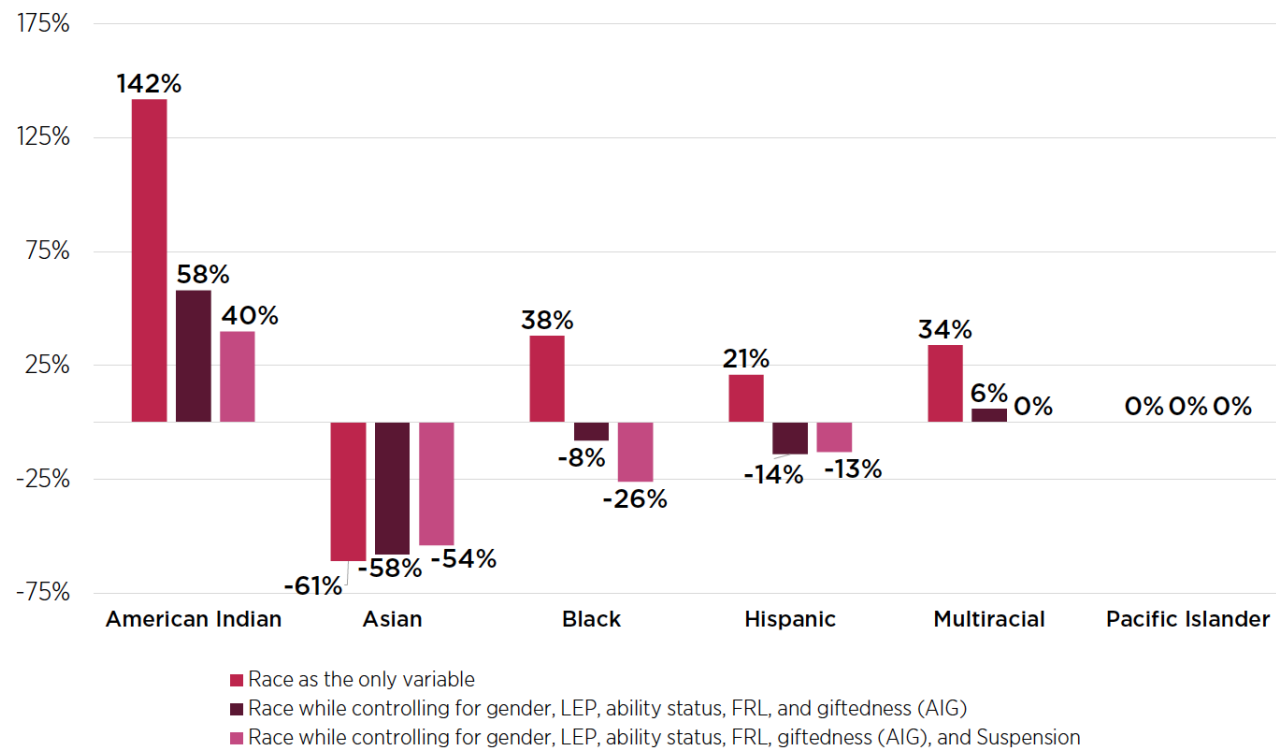
**FIGURE 5.2 : Proportion of Racial/Ethnic Group that is Designated EC**



# Exceptional Children (EC)

- American Indian, Black, and Multiracial students were over-represented in EC as compared to their proportion of all North Carolina students
- With race/ethnicity as the only predictor, American Indian, Black, and Multiracial students had a significantly higher likelihood of carrying an EC designation as compared to White students.
- Taking other factors into account, Black students were actually less likely than Whites to be considered EC

**FIGURE 6.2: Likelihood of Chronic Absenteeism by Race/Ethnicity**

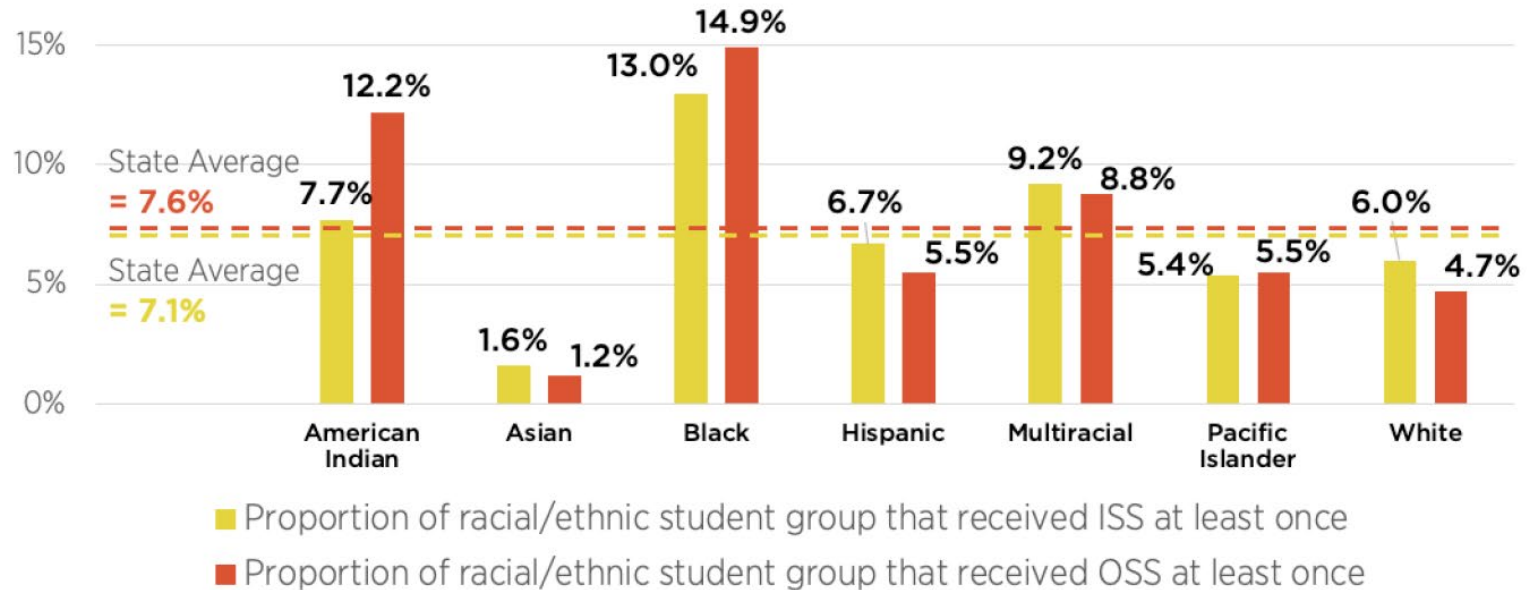


Whites are the comparison group. Control Variables: Gender, Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility, Language Status, Special Education Status, Giftedness (Any).

# Chronic Absenteeism

- American Indian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial students are over-represented in chronic absenteeism, while Asian, Pacific Islander, and White students are under-represented.
- Black students were 38% more likely, Multiracial students were 34% more likely, Hispanics were 21% more likely, and **American Indian students were 142%** more likely than White students to be chronically absent.
- Taking other factors into account, **Black and Hispanic students switched from being more likely to be chronically absent than White students to being less likely to be chronically absent** (by 8% and 14% respectively)

**FIGURE 7.2 :** Proportion of Racial/Ethnic Student Group that Received ISS and OSS at Least Once





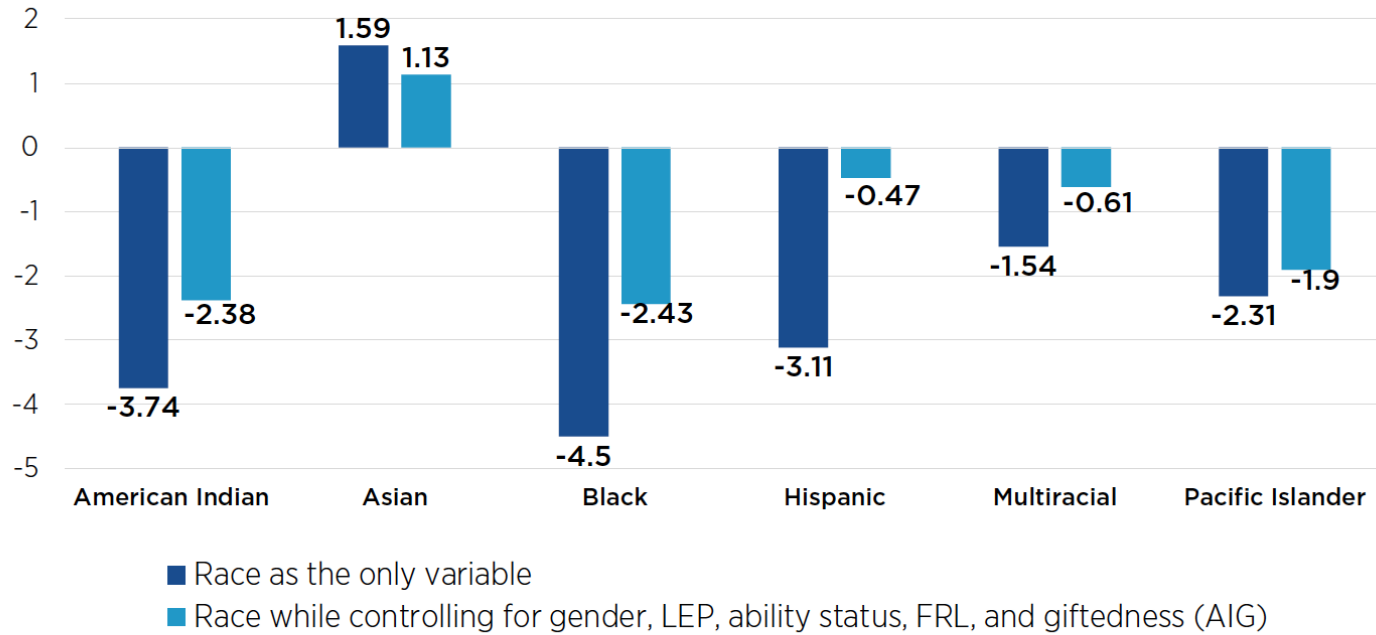
**TABLE 7.1: Rate of Suspension (ISS or OSS)  
for Incidents Involving Subjective Offenses**

American Indian	46%
Asian	30%
Black	51%
Hispanic	42%
Multiracial	50%
Pacific Islander	45%
White	46%
<b>State Average</b>	<b>46%</b>

# Suspension and Student Discipline

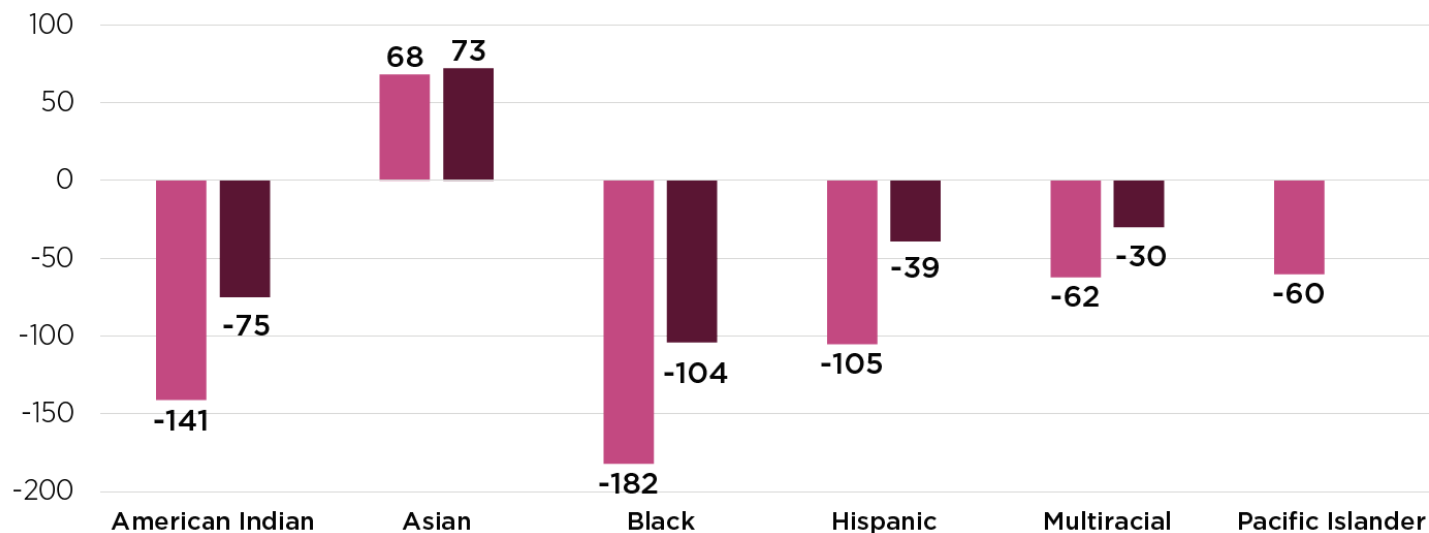
- American Indian, Black, and Multiracial students are over-selected
- If Black students had been given OSS at least once at the state average rate, almost 30,000 fewer Black students would have been suspended
- For both ISS and OSS, Black students represented a higher proportion of the total days served than they did the total incidents.
- Black students were 160% more likely to receive ISS and 84% more likely to receive OSS than White students
- Black students were suspended for incidents involving subjective offenses at the highest rate

**FIGURE 8.2:** Predicted difference in ACT score by race/ethnicity



Whites are the comparison group. Control Variables: Gender, Socioeconomic Status, Language Status, Special Education Status, and Previous Achievement.

**FIGURE 9.2 : Predicted difference in SAT score by race/ethnicity**



■ Race as the only variable

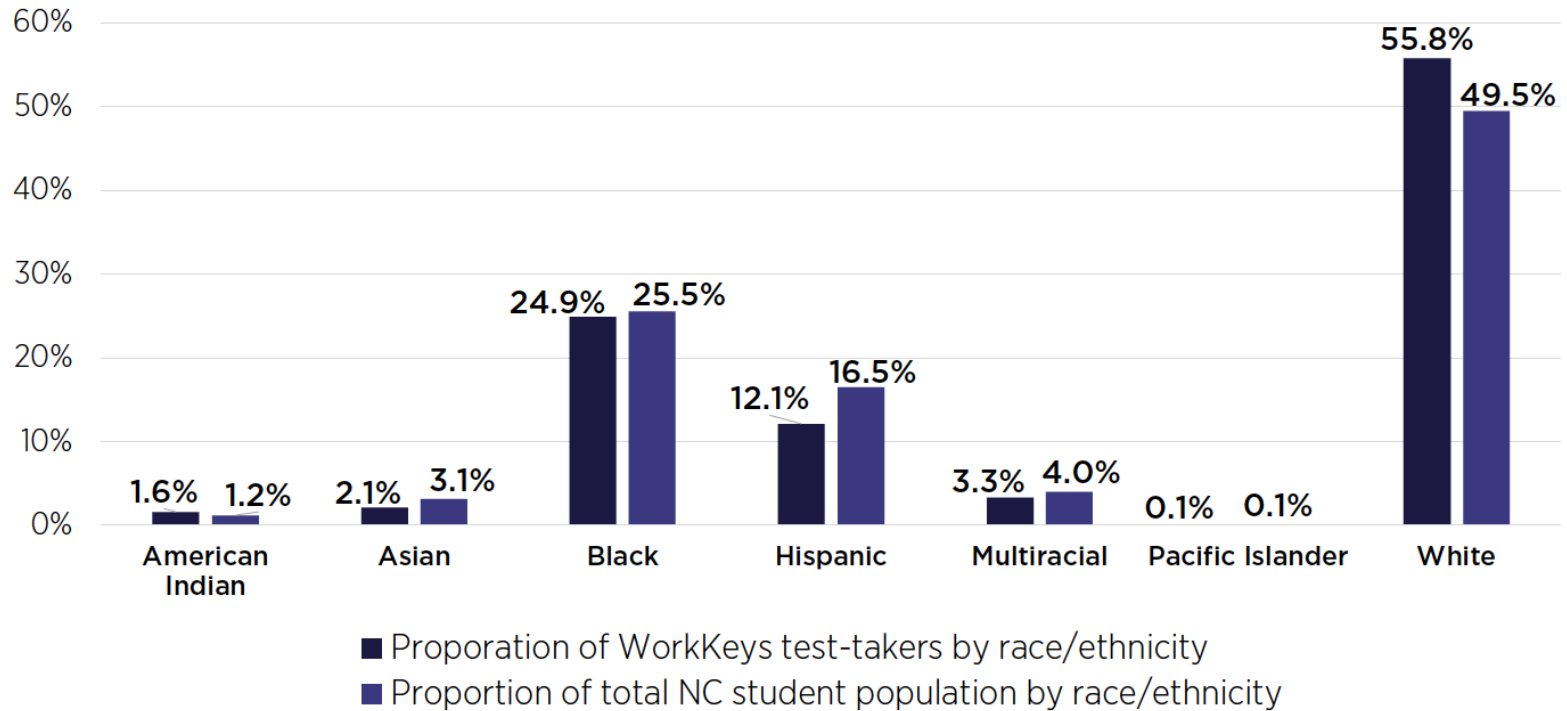
■ Race while controlling for gender, LEP, ability status, FRL, and giftedness (AIG)

Whites are the comparison group. Control Variables: Gender, Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility, Language Status, Special Education Status, Giftedness.

# ACT/SAT

- Asian (21.9) and White students (20.5) had the highest mean ACT score
- Average scores for American Indian (16.9), Black (16.0), Hispanic (17.4), Multiracial (18.9) and Pacific Islander (18.2) students were all below the state average
- Being Black was the strongest predictor of SAT score outside of giftedness

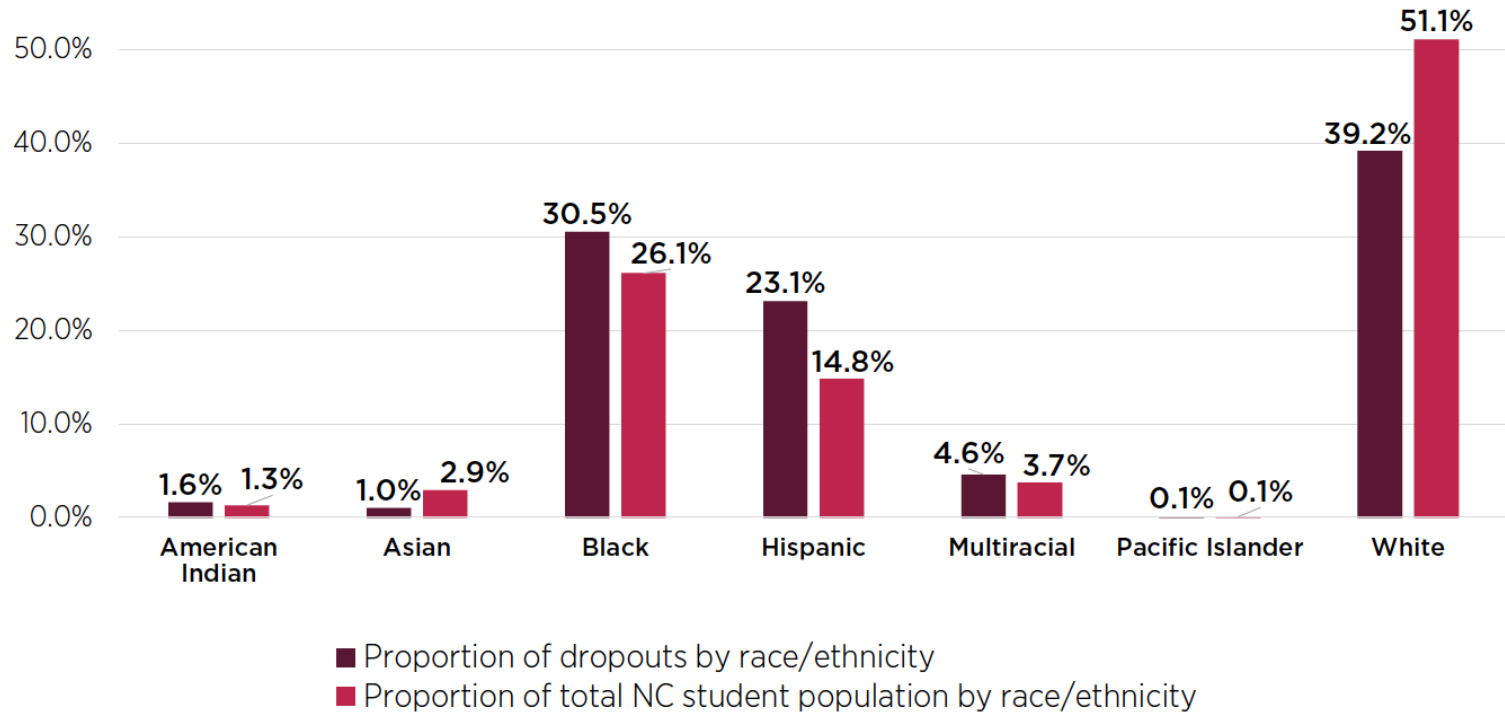
**FIGURE 10.1: Proportion of WorkKeys Test-takers by Race/Ethnicity**



# WorkKeys

- White and American Indian students took WorkKeys at higher rates than their proportion of all North Carolina students.
- Asian and White students attain Silver+ certificates at the highest rates
- American Indian and Black students are least likely to attain Silver+ certificates
- Approximately 71% of students who took the WorkKeys assessment received at least a Silver certificate (Silver+)

**FIGURE 11.1 : Proportion of Dropouts by Race/Ethnicity, Grades 9-13**

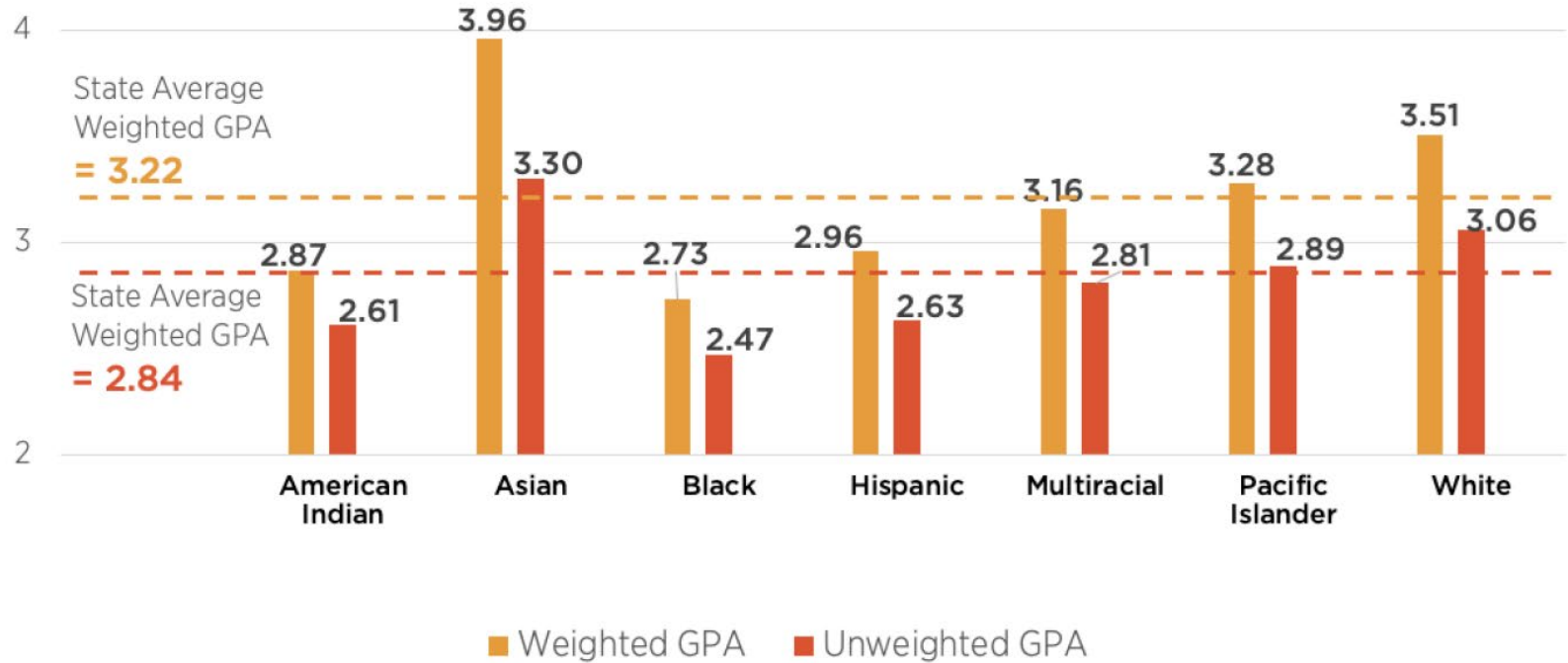




# Dropouts

- Black, Hispanic, American Indian, and Multiracial students are over-represented. Hispanic students have the highest dropout rates
- While American Indian and Black students had higher overall dropout rates than White students, **when we controlled for other factors, race no longer mattered**
- After controlling for other factors, including race/ethnicity, **students that were suspended at least once during the year they dropped out were 230% more likely to drop out than those were not suspended**
- Black students were no more likely than Whites to dropout of high school after accounting for suspension

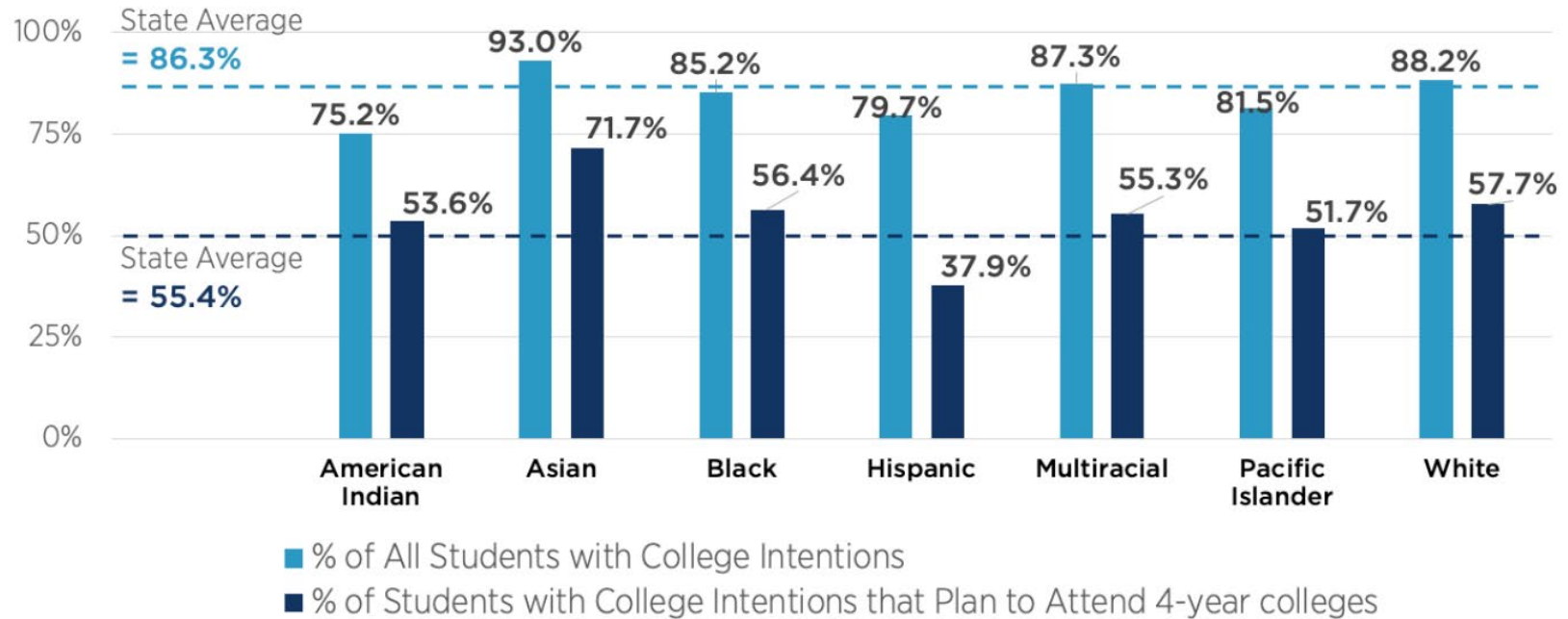
**FIGURE 12.1: Weighted and Unweighted GPA by Race/Ethnicity**



# Grade Point Average (GPA)

- Race/ethnicity was a significant and substantial predictor of both weighted and unweighted GPA even after controlling for other related variables.
- This finding likely indicates, as has been demonstrated elsewhere in the report (see Advanced Placement Courses, Honors Courses), that non-Asian student groups of color have lower performance than White and Asian students in advanced courses

**FIGURE 13.1:** Proportion of Students with College Intentions by Race/Ethnicity

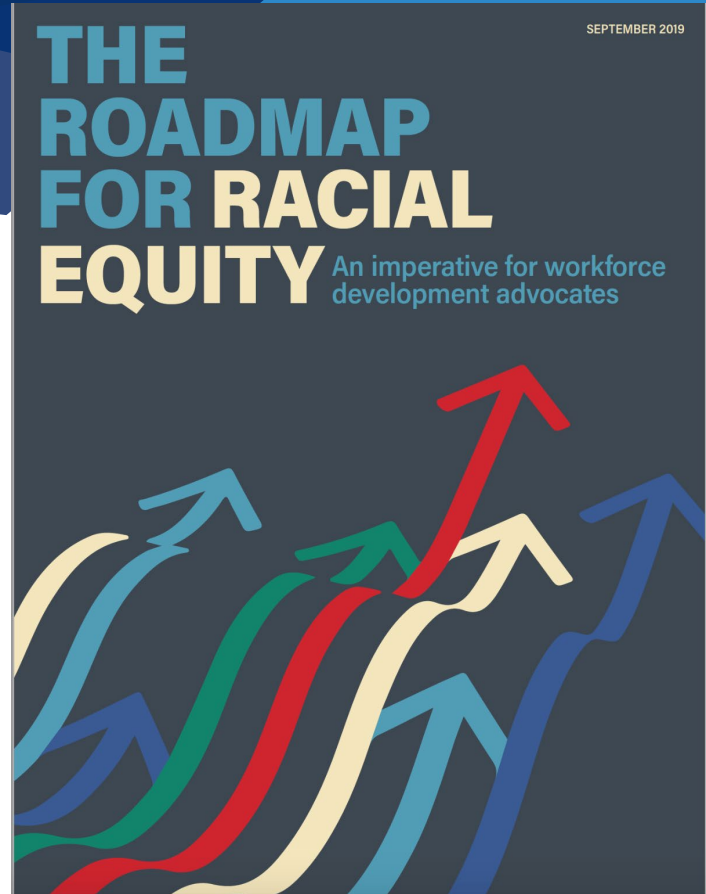


# Post Secondary Intentions

- While controlling for other factors, Asians have dramatically higher odds of having college intentions than their White counterparts
- Black students were 4% more likely to aspire to college than Whites net of other factors in the model
- American Indian (-36%) and Hispanic (-18%) students were predicted to have substantially lower likelihoods of college intentions even while controlling for other variables
- The college intentions of Multiracial and Pacific Islander students were similar to those of White students when controls were applied

# Racial Equity in the Workforce

- By 2030 the majority of the American workforce will be people of color
- Most immigrants are non-white, with the largest share comprising of Latinxs and Asians
- Closing racial gaps in education would be a \$2.3T benefit to the American economy by 2050
- **We have to start talking racial inequity in education as the greatest threat to American prosperity**





May We Keep Marching On  
to Freedom Hill!

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